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Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

Sixty-eighth session
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Item 6 of the provisional agenda
Convention on Road Traffic (1949)

Consistency between the Convention on Road Traffic (1949) and Vehicle Technical Regulations

Submitted by the Governments of Austria, Belgium, France and Italy

1. This document proposes amendments (indicated in bold text) to the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic to include systems which influence the way vehicles are driven and to take account of recent technical developments.

2. Separate documents introduce the equivalent amendment proposals to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic and to the Annex of the 1971 European Supplement to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic.

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I. Convention on Road Traffic of 19 September 1949

Article 8

1. Every vehicle or combination of vehicles proceeding as a unit shall have a driver.

2. Draught, pack or saddle animals shall have a driver, and cattle shall be accompanied, except in special areas which shall be marked at the points of entry.

3. Convoys of vehicles and animals shall have the number of drivers prescribed by domestic regulations.

4. Convoys shall, if necessary, be divided into sections of moderate length, and be sufficiently spaced out for the convenience of traffic. This provision does not apply to regions where migration of nomads occurs.

5. Drivers shall at all times be able to control their vehicle or guide their animals. When approaching other road users, they shall take such precautions as may be required for the safety of the latter.

(a) Vehicle systems which influence the way vehicles are driven shall be deemed to be in conformity with the first sentence of this paragraph and with paragraph 1 of Article 10, when they are in conformity with the conditions of construction, fitting and utilization according to international legal instruments concerning wheeled vehicles, equipment and parts which can be fitted and/or be used on wheeled vehicles.[1]

(b) Vehicle systems which influence the way vehicles are driven and are not in conformity with the aforementioned conditions of construction, fitting and utilization, shall be deemed to be in conformity with the first sentence of this paragraph and with paragraph 1 of Article 10, when such systems can be overridden or switched off by the driver.

[1] **The UN Regulations annexed to the "Agreement concerning the adoption of uniform technical prescriptions for wheeled vehicles, equipment and parts which can be fitted and/or be used on wheeled vehicles and the conditions for reciprocal recognition of approvals granted on the basis of these prescriptions" done at Geneva on 20 March 1958.**

The UN Global Technical Regulations developed in the framework of the "Agreement concerning the establishing of global technical regulations for wheeled vehicles, equipment and parts which can be fitted and/or be used on wheeled vehicles" done at Geneva on 25 June 1998.

II. Justification by the Governments of Austria, Belgium, France and Italy

1. Drivers' skills vary substantially; human failure is by far the predominant cause of traffic accidents.

2. Vehicle systems such as Driver Assistance Systems support the driver in their driving task. They also may take influence on the way vehicles are driven. Thereby, they have the potential to take immediate beneficiary influence on road safety or to do the same by reducing drivers' workload.

3. Yet, in the recent past, technical developments have given rise to doubt and uncertainties whether all vehicle systems available today are in concordance / consistent with traffic regulations. The suggested amendment resolves this concern.

4. Keeping the driver in a superior role is a guiding principle of road traffic regulations. Therefore, overrideability as well as the possibility for the driver to switch systems off ensure that the driver's will is put forth.

5. Nevertheless there may be such vehicle systems which do – temporarily or constantly – not allow for overriding their interventions at any time or for switching them off completely, e.g. brake assist, a system which supports the driver in an emergency brake situation by applying – in case of an emergency braking manoeuvre – the maximum braking deceleration. Such system design may be rooted in the fact that a driver might not show appropriate actions or reactions in a potentially dangerous driving situation leading to the effect that the vehicle system would be prevented from deploying its full benefit for road traffic safety. Moreover, dangerous driving situations are imaginable which the driver might even aggravate by trying to override a vehicle system's intervention (e.g. by overriding / aborting an emergency braking intervention or by overriding / aborting an emergency swerving intervention). Such vehicle systems – even though they may possibly be not overrideable at any time or even though they may not be switched off completely – may help the driver to maintain his vehicle under control in dangerous driving situations. Therefore vehicle systems shall be deemed to be in conformity with the principles mentioned in Art. 8 [paragraphs 1 and] 5 and Art. 13 paragraph 1 of the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic (1968) if they are in conformity with the conditions of construction, fitting and utilization according to international legal instruments concerning wheeled vehicles, equipment and parts, in particular the regulations annexed to the Geneva Agreements of 1958 and 1998.

6. The driver's obligation to monitor and control any kind of action taken by a vehicle system is addressed by the guiding principle underlying all road traffic rules. The systems are not designed to overrule decisions taken by sane, accountable drivers.

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Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

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Item 7(b) of the provisional agenda
Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968):
Amendment Proposals on Variable Message Signs (VMS)

Amendment Proposals on Variable Message Signs (VMS)

Submitted by the Government of Spain

This document, consolidates Informal document No. 5 (September 2013) with ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2012/1/Add.1.

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I. Chapter I, General Provisions, Article 1, Definitions

A. (w) A road sign is said to be:

(i) "Fixed" if it is a sign for the purpose of displaying a number of inscriptions and symbols in a specific place/ under a permanent basis; and

(ii) "Variable" if it is a sign for the purpose of displaying a number of inscriptions and symbols that may be changed or switched on or off as required.

B. (y) "Unit of information" means a specific group of inscriptions and symbols that refer together to the same aspect of a traffic issue, for example, "dangerous congestion", "in the tunnel entrance" or "from April 9 to April 11".

C. Chapter II, Road Signs, Article 8

1.ter

Variable Message Signs shall only be used as a temporary measure. Issues which require long-term use in a static location should always be shown on permanent (fixed) road signs.

II. Annex 1, Road Signs, Section E, Special Regulation Signs, sub-Section II, Descriptions, point 1, Signs indicating a regulation or danger warning applying to one or more traffic lanes

(iv) E, 22a "Traffic may not proceed along the lane over which it is placed."

(v) E, 22b "Traffic may proceed along the lane over which it is placed."

(vi) E, 22c "The lane is about to be closed to traffic and the road users on that lane must move over to the lane indicated by the arrow."

A. Annex 3, "E" Signs

Add:

Symbols for Annex 3:

E, 22[a]	E, 22[b]	E, 22[c]

B. Chapter II, Road Signs

Article 8. bis

1. When used, symbols should always provide the main unit of information in any VMS message.

2. When a VMS has such a capability, graphical elements (symbols) should always be used as much as possible to replace the need for text.

3. If used, a regulatory road sign should not require any supporting text to be clearly understood by road users.

4. Danger warning messages (using the red triangle) should generally not be used when the dangerous spot or stretch of road is far from the VMS (for instance, more than 5 km). When using words in danger warning road signs, place the information about the nature of the danger first and then brief complementary advice can be added.

5. When a VMS is used to inform about a situation at some distance (for instance, 5 km or more) or in the future (e.g. expected road works), additional information (e.g. distance, or respectively an indication of date and time) is necessary. The recommended order of the message is the following:

(i) Information about the nature of the event;

(ii) Distance and/or time indication;

(iii) Additional information (e.g. advice, cause).

6. VMS should not display scrolling, alternating or sequential inscriptions and symbols.

7. The meaning of a symbol should not also be shown in text in a VMS message, unless required to educate drivers as to the meaning of a new road sign.

8. Use only well-known and international abbreviations (e.g, 'km' for kilometre, 'min' for minutes, etc.).

9. To ensure they are safe for drivers to read, VMS displays should contain no more than 4 units of information.

10. A VMS should be blank when no traffic related information has to be displayed. An exception could be the display of dots or the time to indicate that the VMS is working.

11. Commercial/advertising displays shall not permitted.